"DIVINE HEALING" UNDER THE LENS

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DIVINE HEALING UNDER THE LENS

By A BEREAN

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Preface.

IN sending out this little book the author solemnly calls upon God to witness that his only object in its publication is to glorify Him by correcting certain prevalent views which he firmly considers erroneous and pernicious.

Knowing Jesus Christ as a personal Saviour, and rejoicing to serve Him and to advance His cause, he would fear to write a word that would in any way weaken the faith of the humblest disciple of his Lord, but would rather seek to strengthen and encourage it. When, however, he sees a dangerous and misleading doctrine, which he believes is the result not of an intelligent knowledge of God's Word, but of a distorted interpretation, combined with a fanciful, yea and even fanatical (though pious) system of purely human origin, he feels that he must "cry aloud," if haply he may warn some earnest soul from danger.

While it is true that this age is sadly deficient in faith, it is also true that fanaticism abounds, and therefore, in seeking to develop faith, it is absolutely necessary to remember that only that faith is genuine which is based upon the Word of God; and that all other belief, however sincere, is doomed to a failure which will bring reproach upon the cause of Christ and cause many to stumble. This latter is the usual accompaniment of the teaching and attempted practice of so-called "divine healing."

It's seeming virtues and successes are paraded with much show and persistency by its advocates, too often on evidence far from convincing, and frequently positively absurd or revolting; while no account is taken of the dark side of the picture—the failure, shame and folly which often make shipwreck of faith, for, when the theory manifestly fails in its working and suffering and death are the disastrous results (which, alas! is too often the case), resort is had to excuses and ingenious explanations that are not only illogical, but frequently border on misrepresentation and falsehood.

Introductory

CERTAIN FACTS AND CONSIDERATIONS.

GOD undoubtedly places emphasis on **Faith.** In our Lord's colloquy with Philip, preceding the feeding of the multitude, it is recorded of His query to this disciple, "this he said to prove him." He did not want food from Philip, but an expression of faith in Himself.

Of Martha He asked in His conversation about the resurrection, **"Believest thou this?"** We also read that "he that cometh unto God **must believe** that God is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."

Yet it must also be admitted that it is on just such passages that fanaticism builds its foundation. Therefore it becomes profitable to inquire somewhat about this exercise of faith that the Word enjoins.

Some speak of faith and then fix their longing eyes on some desirable object, and forthwith

"claim it," when they have not the faintest divine warrant for doing so. The main consideration should be to know how and for what God wishes me to believe. **Is not faith, before all and above all, to center in Him?** It is not to be primarily for **something,** unless it be something that He has definitely promised. "How do you pray?" asked some one of an eminent servant of God. He answered, "I find a promise and then plead it."

We here at once come upon a bone of contention—the advocates of divine healing boldly claiming by innumerable quotations and references that bodily healing is one of the distinctive blessings which God has promised to his children. As this claim is to be fully treated later we will not here dwell upon it, but will emphasize the point that faith in God in times of poverty, distress, famine, persecution, **illness,** yea even when facing martyrdom, is infinitely higher than the believing for any physical or temporal benefit that can be named.

2. But is it not a fact that God's children have the privilege, yea the right, to pray for bodily

healing as for any other thing that may seem to them desirable? Assuredly, but always with the submissive spirit of our Lord, who in the midst of His Gethsemane agony added to His petition, "Thy will be done."

3. No Christian disputes God's power, nor His wisdom and love. He can do all things, but will He answer my particular prayer in the exact way in which I would have it answered? Not always. His No, to my petition, may in the end yield the fuller blessing. And such a statement is the mere alphabet of Christian faith—something we are supposed to learn in our spiritual infancy, and to apply in every circumstance that arises. With this rule before us, can we not recall many instances when even sickness, instead of being "always a curse," as some persistently claim, proved a marvelous blessing?

4. Is it not also a fact that some of the purest and holiest Christians the world has known were weak in body and even chronic invalids, and yet possessed of faith in God that shamed many a physically robust one?

5. Is it not a fact that multitudes of Christians who never make any profession as to this view of divine healing are strong and active, even down to old age, while on the other hand a large part of those who do profess it and are ever claiming healing never seem to have it? What answer can be made to this logic of facts? From observation at close range we can testify that advocates of healing are usually a sorry exhibit from the standpoint of health.

6. Does not every one know that testimonials as to the miraculous efficacy of all kinds of nostrums come by the thousands from honest people who have really gotten well after their use? that Roman Catholic relics have many enthusiastic champions? that many persons recover from dangerous maladies who have no doctor, nor medicines, nor even prayers, to say nothing of anointing? and that that refinement of satanic ingenuity, Christian Science, has astounding testimonies? Let us not blink at facts in our search for truth.

7. Do not even the apostles of divine healing (so-called) fail in body even as others, losing

hair, teeth, hearing and vision like common mortals?

8. Is it necessary to state as a fact that the addiction to patent or proprietary medicines (?) —many of which are the rankest impostures, being composed largely of cheap alcohol—is one of the greatest follies as well as curses of the times, and cannot be too strongly condemned? Even though as stated in paragraph 6, some strangely claim to have been helped by their use, the benefit, to be sure, if any, being due not to any virtue in the fake medicine, but to the user's confidence in it.

9. Again, it is a fact that positive physical improvement has frequently come to those who after long dependence upon drugs and doctors have under some impulse repudiated both, and have found delight in their deliverance.

10. Living soberly, righteously and godly in this present life brings its own reward, which accounts for the improvement in the health of many who give up a life of self-indulgence, for submission to the will of God, with its consequent

peace of mind and heart, transmitting its beneficent influence to the entire physical man.

11. Rest and relaxation from exacting and trying experiences, together with a change of residence to congenial surroundings, especially when accompanied by Christian companionship, with Bible study and worship, it must be admitted have brought restoration to many a physical wreck. And herein lies the great advantage of Faith and Healing Homes, the soothing atmosphere and quiet devotion to God having a true and powerful effect.

12. Yet even in the very center of these supposed strongholds of faith are found distressing examples of suffering, for which there is no alleviation, and whose disorders steadily increase with the passing months and years.

13. Is it not true that those who have the most positive and convincing testimonies as to healing are usually persons subject to nervous disorders? Thus proving the old truth of the power of mind over matter.

14. That the mind exerts great power over the body is now so well known as to be accepted

everywhere. Dr. L. Menard in a recent article on "Some Methods of Psychotherapy," writes as follows:

"Physicians do not like the word 'mind,' but as it corresponds to an entity that cannot be neglected in their work, they speak of it in Greek, as 'psychism.' . . . Numerous maladies or morbid symptoms are functions of the psychism. . . . The influence of thought on the organism is easy to prove. . . . The concentration of the mind on a point, or the lively excitation of passions or imagination, have the power to modify the organic functions. Emotion and imagination are able to modify the secretions, as is shown by the fact that the mouth becomes dry and hot in fear or anger, while the thought of savory food makes it moist. . . . A violent emotion may thus so greatly change the secretion of gastric juice as to cause indigestion in persons predisposed to it. The popular expression 'green with anger' refers to an attack of jaundice caused by an accumulation of bile in the blood due to passion; in such a case, nervous excitement hinders the normal workings of the liver. . . .

"Psychotherapy," Dr. Menard goes on to tell us, "avails itself of these facts in a variety of ways. It may cure by emotion, as when a girl who had lost the use of her voice for years regained it in the fright of seeing a friend in the path of an oncoming train. Or it may act by persuasion, as when the physician succeeds in arguing a patient out of the idea that he is unable to talk or to walk. Again, it may have recourse to distraction, as Pascal did when he cured a toothache by applying himself to a difficult mathematical problem. Or it may employ perhaps through long years, processes of education and training. All these are methods of treatment by psychotherapy or scientific mind-cure."

15. The average Christian, with his notorious inattention to the Word of God, and consequent consciousness of ignorance of divine truth, notably in its dispensational aspects, is apt to look upon any positive religious claims, especially when put forward by admittedly pious people, with a kind of awe and reverence, as being beyond anything he has himself experienced, and therefore to be received without controversy.

16. Many there are, too, who do not accept the common teaching of divine healing, but have the feeling that it is a pity to disturb the faith of those who advocate and seek to practice it, on the ground that such may get some benefit from their belief, and even if it does them no special good it will do no harm, and therefore these persons make no adverse comment.

17. It is beyond dispute that while the science of medicine and doctoring is often at fault, yet there are cases beyond computation where skilful surgery and intelligent medical attention have rescued patients whose lives were trembling in the balance.

18. Another fact that cannot be disputed: all advocates of divine healing (so-called), together with Christian Scientists, and adherents of every other school of belief in physical healing without medical attention, when they pass away, die of precisely the same diseases, the same kinds of accidents, or the same kind of bodily weakness caused by old age, as do other members of the human family. And one waits in vain for an explanation of this condition, which must ever be to them one of weakness and humiliation.

19. And finally as we come to an end of these impartial facts, let it be freely stated to the glory of God that there are on record marvelous cases of cure where man's skill was impotent, or not available, and where the astounding and gladdening results could only be ascribed to one cause and that the wonder-working power of God in answer to the prayers of His people, who thus proved that He is still concerned in the temporal welfare of His saints, and that when it is according to His pleasure, He restores their bodies, even though the grave has seemingly opened its mouth to receive them.

This may readily and sincerely be believed by the Christian, without his accepting by any means that statement of the doctrine known as "Healing in the Atonement for this Present Gospel Age."

As the gist of the subject is contained in this designation it is highly proper and important that its claims should be examined carefully, prayerfully and faithfully—without bias or preconceived opinion—by the light of God's Word.

It was in this attitude that the writer began

his study of the subject. He was then predisposed in its favor, being of the class of persons named in paragraph 15 whose study of the Word, especially in this direction had been limited, and whose regard for his fellow-believers, who laid claim to deeper discoveries in divine truth, was so strong that he was more than ready to accept all that he heard with a willing heart, and to hope that he himself might soon attain to such a faith and experience.

The way quickly opened to close fellowship with one of the largest movements holding these beliefs, and to a prominent position at the very headquarters of the work, where his opportunities for observation were free and unobstructed, while his sympathies were wholly enlisted.

It was under these favorable conditions that his closer study of the subject began, and where as an honest man, and a sincere student of the Word, he was, almost against his will, forced to see the utter unscripturalness of the teaching, and to witness how it signally failed in its practical operations.

Scriptural Teaching

THE Scriptures, to be sure, are made the foundation for their belief by all schools of believers in Divine Healing.

And this, together with the beneficent purpose of restoring the suffering—a work which, if genuine, only a cruel heart would oppose—explains largely the tenacious hold that this doctrine secures upon so many minds.

Sympathetic interest in and practical devotion to the sick and afflicted, would be an engaging and winning feature of any doctrine, and when this is buttressed by seemingly definite passages from God's Word, it becomes almost irresistible.

It is thereby of the utmost importance for one who would adversely discuss the teaching, as commonly given, to be able to give the true interpretation of the scriptural references employed.

In undertaking this service it is first to be noted how little distinction there is usually made

concerning portions of the Word, the difference between which a little study would reveal.

It is notorious how advocates of "Divine Healing" indiscriminately jumble together (1) **"The Promises to Israel,"** (2) **"The Miracles of Our Lord,"** (3) **"The Healing Work of the Apostles,"** (4) **"The Gift of Healing,"** and (5) what they call **"Divine Life."**

Taking up these in the order named we will consider the erroneous use of

I. THE PROMISES TO ISRAEL.

Here the phrase **"Jehovah Rophi"** is frequently employed, "I am the Lord that healeth thee," being a familiar quotation, and leading to that oft-repeated expression of superiority, "I have the Lord as my healer."

Now if the Scriptures were really known, would not the utter incongruity of appropriating this promise to Israel by the Church, in this age, be seen? Israel was God's earthly people, and they were given promises and curses of a temporal nature, the former for obedience, the latter for their sinning. To show that these will not fit when applied to the church now we have only

to recall the many among God's choicest ones who are weak and ailing in body, and yet whose whole life in many cases from childhood, has been devoted to him. The curses threatened against Israel will be seen to be the plagues visited upon the Egyptians, to be sent upon Israel as a punishment for sin, and while now and again we have heard some particularly hardy and strenuous (and also logical—from his standpoint) believer in divine healing taunt an afflicted fellow believer with having been "down into Egypt" as an explanation of his suffering, the position is so untenable as to be generally with charming inconsistency abandoned. For any one with a little judgment knows that the plagues of Egypt are not now being visited on even pronounced sinners, whether among God's children or worldlings, both of whom are frequently among the most robust physically. Truly God's erring ones are dealt with as are all sinners, but not now usually in this way, or at least not by any clearly defined, visible rule.

Psalm 103 : 3, "Who healeth all thy diseases," is another triumphant quotation, and again Is-

rael is assailed by Christian robbers, who steal her promises. But aside from this there are other knotty difficulties, when the context is literally accepted by the believer in this age. He need not toil anymore for sustenance, for does not the promise say "who satisfieth thy mouth with good things"? and his youth moreover is also renewed like the eagle's, so that he need not anticipate old age(!). These are beautiful portions of God's inspired Word, with a deep spiritual meaning, and a blessing to all who read; but for all that they were originally given to Israel, to whom they are truly significant. The same attitude must also be taken toward the beautiful **91st Psalm.** That it applies primarily or literally to the Christian in this age is likely to be disproven by the first epidemic that ravages a community, when the Christian's home is as open to invasion as any other, and indeed no one would wonder should the disease visit the home of the Christian and enter no other at the time.

No one believes more firmly than the writer in the plenary, verbal inspiration of the whole Bible, but he also believes in its dispensational teach-

ing, without which it cannot be properly understood, and the wide-spread ignorance of which gives the Adversary such a rare opportunity for unsettling the Bible reader's faith.

Let an infidel ask a child of God whose home is invaded by pestilence, how that occurrence can possibly harmonize with God's Word in Psalm 91 : 10, and unless he knows how to rightly divide God's Word, what answer can he give? Thank God His Word is always true, but it must be properly understood, and nothing causes such confusion as the unintelligent mingling of passages that have a specific application to Israel, to the Church, or to the world.

All the Bible is for me, but all the Bible is not about me. I may read and prize it all, and from every page draw lessons and gain knowledge by studying examples, analogies, principles of truth, from God's dealings with man in all ages, but to literally apply promises, curses, admonitions, etc., indiscriminately to myself, will land me in the midst of hopeless difficulties and contradictions. As someone has said, "I may look over the shoulder of another and read the letter in his hand,

and from it gain many valuable hints, but for all that the letter is not addressed to me, nor does it apply to me primarily," and every Christian must admit the truth of this position. Ask one who has never even heard of dispensational truth, whether he is to order his life by Leviticus or by the New Testament Epistles, and he will at once answer, "The latter." Even with his little knowledge he knows that Leviticus has no direct application to him now. Some even get so far along as to speak of Law and Grace, and to say, "I am no longer under Law but Grace." But many who use these terms cannot explain them. If we are to be governed by all in the Old Testament, then we would all be seventh day or Sabbath observers, to say nothing of all the ritual requirements which would still be binding upon us.

The foregoing argument also applies to **Isaiah 53.** It is a favorite and a proper chapter from which to preach the Gospel (as we may also do, for that matter, from Genesis, the Tabernacle, or any other portion of the Word), as it refers to Christ's sacrificial death, and yet it is altogether

Jewish in its cast. "*We* did esteem him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted"; who could give utterance to such an expression but Israel? And its fulfilment will come—the saying of the very words, when Israel accepts the Messiah revealing Himself in glory, recalling then with shame the former rejection of their king.

As to the healing of **Hezekiah's boil,** it would be hard to prove that the figs were not medicinal and therefore a remedy, but, aside from this, what is shown here for divine healing?

2 Chron. 16: 12, 13. Asa's case is often quoted with much ado, for is it not said, "yet in his disease he sought not to the Lord, but to the physician, and Asa slept with his fathers"? But frankly, why did Asa die? because he consulted a physician? No, assuredly not; but because "he sought not to the Lord." He turned his back on God, a thing which no child of God should do at any time, whether he has a physician or not.

If it were true in these days that all who consult physicians immediately die, the monotony would soon put visits to physicians, and visits from physicians in bad repute, and the result

would be more promptly effective to the discontinuance of remedies and doctors, than all of Dowie's fulminations against "doctors, drugs and devils."

Besides which, in what a wrong position would this passage place at least one great teacher of divine healing, who frequently suggests that those who are not strong enough in faith to take the position that he advocates, of having the Lord alone as healer, should still resort to physicians. He is at least guilty of allowing or advising that against which the Bible has given (according to his own teaching) an awful warning.

II. THE HEALING MIRACLES OF OUR LORD.

In explanation of these and in giving them their proper place, we think the following treatment will be found entirely satisfactory.

First, That they were truly indicative of the Saviour's love for, and interest in, humanity; evidence of His abounding mercy and compassion, and freely performed by His great heart of pity.

Again, They were tokens of His power, and

attested *His divine ability* to order the very laws of nature to do His bidding.

They were also signs—as He Himself calls them—to attract attention to His teaching, and to prove its truth. This latter is clearly brought out in the narrative of the healing of the man sick of the palsy (Luke 5:24).

Perhaps Godet's comments are as practical and inclusive as any short treatise extant:

"For what purpose, then, were the miracles wrought? Jesus calls them signs; and so they were—external manifestations destined to make the weaker spirits understand the moral work He had come to accomplish in the race (comp. John 6:26, 27). As His teaching was a miracle in words, so His miracles were a teaching in acts. By this means He revealed Himself as one who had the power of curing the spiritually blind and mute, the spiritual leper and palsy-stricken—as one who had the power of delivering souls from Satan, and freeing them from the eternal death which threatened them. Each group of His miracles illustrates a special side of that work of spiritual deliverance which He had come to ac-

complish. But this is not all. When He extends His miraculous power to nature proper—stilling the storm, multiplying the loaves, etc.—He reveals Himself, not only as the curer of the moral miseries of humanity, but also as the future restorer of nature itself, and proves that He has the power of establishing perfect harmony between the whole universe and a sanctified humanity. Thus the miracles serve, not to produce faith in carnal hearts, but to make manifest to souls disposed to believe, or already believing, the riches of the treasure which have been offered them in the person of Jesus."

This brings us to a question that is presented with great frequency and emphasis by the advocates of divine healing, viz: *"Is not Jesus just the same today, and will He not perform His works of mercy as freely now as ever?"* This is considered an attitude of impregnable security; but to us seems to indicate a very superficial knowledge of the Divine plan.

True it is that Christ Jesus is just the same today, for He cannot change, but it is just as true that He is not now working as He did while upon

the earth. To realize this it is merely necessary to note **that He is not now raising the dead,** as He did while here in physical form, for even the boldest fanatic living is not equal to claiming that any really dead are now being raised, or that this has occurred in all the centuries since apostolic times.

This triumphant challenge "Is not Jesus just the same today?" so easily disposed of, affords a fair sample of the many fallacious arguments advanced by the advocates of the doctrine we are discussing.

III. THE HEALING POWER OF THE APOSTLES

is the next phase of the subject to be considered. They were so empowered and demonstrated their enduement, with miracles that are undisputed in the Divine record. Mark 16:15-18 is a strong quotation and much employed, nor have we any disposition to detract from its testimony, yet certain **truths** must not be left out of our view, else we will be found false witnesses.

Among these truths is the fact that, however "healers" may claim to have or be accredited with the power to restore the sick, they are not now

blessed with the ability to "speak with new tongues." Many holy, spirit-filled missionaries have gone forth to preach Christ in foreign lands, but whoever heard that a single one among them was enabled to speak, without more or less study, the language of the people?

Furthermore, are Christians—the best among them—now exempt from the effect of snake-bites, and of deadly poisons?

In reply to the question, "When was this authority or power abrogated?" we take pleasure in quoting the sensible words of Albert Barnes. "'*and these signs,*' i. e., these miracles. These evidences that they are sent from God. '*Them that believe.*' The apostles, and those in the primitive age who were endowed with like power. This promise was fulfilled if it can be shown that these signs followed in the case of *any* who believed, and it is not necessary to suppose that they would follow in the case of *all.* The meaning is, that they would be the result of *faith,* or of the belief of the Gospel. It is true that they were. These signs were shown in the case of the apostles and early Christians. The infidel cannot say that the

promise has not been fulfilled unless he can show that this *never* occurred; the Christian should be satisfied that the promise was fulfilled if these miracles were *ever* actually wrought, though they do not occur now; and the believer now should not expect a miracle in his case. **Miracles were necessary for the establishment of religion in the world; they are not necessary for its continuance now."**

And further it may be said in answer to the question above raised, that while there is no definite statement abrogating the miraculous power conferred upon the apostles, we find that even in their own experience, according to the Bible testimony—as the truth which they preached became more firmly established, especially among the Gentiles, the working of miracles became less conspicuous until it ceased entirely. To prove this one need only read the Book of Acts, where the gradual cessation of the exercise of miraculous power cannot but be noticed.

IV. THE GIFT OF HEALING.

1 Cor. 12: 9, 10 is the principal scriptural reference, and it is so definite as to admit of no

question that in the early church there was a special bestowment of miraculous power to some of its members for the healing of the sick, as there was also bestowed the gift to work special miracles, to prophecy, to discern spirits, to speak other languages, to interpret the same, etc., etc.

Here again the interest centers in the gift of healing, our friends making no pretense of believing in the present existence of the other gifts.

However, the question is an important one, as to the relation these gifts hold to the church in this period of its history. That they have ceased, is to our minds not even a question for discussion, for that any one today has, for instance, a genuing gift of healing, is to us, impossible of belief.

Peter could say (Acts 9:34), "Eneas, Jesus Christ maketh thee whole." Peter had such power that even his shadow falling on the sick was effective for their healing—or, at least, so we assume (Acts 5:15); and handkerchiefs and aprons that had touched Paul's body were used for the restoration of the afflicted, as we find stated in Acts 19:12. In which connection it is recorded (and it is well to note the exact lan-

guage, v. 11), "God wrought **special** miracles by the hands of Paul." How pitiable the comparison, when these New Testament examples are placed side by side, with the claims made today by recognized leaders. We attended a well known meeting for Divine Healing once a week for six months, hearing much teaching on the subject, and seeing many persons anointed, but honesty forces us to state that in that time we never saw one case of healing that could be demonstrated.

Dowie had quite an array of crutches on his tabernacle wall, but there were so many authenticated cases proving that his victims had surrendered them prematurely, and that they were just as much in need of them afterward, as to invalidate the claim of his power.

How gladly would the writer acknowledge and advertise the possessor of this gift today if he could be found. Such a miracle worker would be the wonder of the world; even one who by his beneficent ministry, in the wards of hospitals, and wherever the sick were found, would prove his power beyond question.

There are two views held by Protestant Christians, as to the cessation of these gifts. First, and this is the view held by the Irvingites, that they were forfeited by the church's guilt. History tells the painful story of the failure of Irvingism in its effort to re-establish the Apostolic Church. There was no life in the image it erected. The clock would not run.

Second, that they were extinguished by God as no longer necessary, being designed as temporary gifts, which having performed their service were discontinued.

But would not the gift be restored if Christians were to come back to a simpler faith and a truer devotion to God?

In answer we may safely say, Perhaps. And yet it is seriously to be questioned whether the operation of this power hinges here at all; surely not, if it is not God's plan for the period. He has had saints in every age, and has them now, heroes of devotion and faith, but for all that there is no manifestation of healing power like that exercised by the Apostles. And until the church really possesses the power let her make no empty

claim. Enthusiasm should not be allowed to outstrip Truth. When God really works miracles, no labored arguments are needed to substantiate them; they speak for themselves, with convincing power.

While recognizing the gift of healing in the early church, it will not be amiss to refer to some other facts that are also in the inspired record, viz: the case of Timothy, with weak stomach, and often infirmities. Many futile efforts have been made to explain away this damaging testimony, one of the most unique among them being that of a brother who gave it as his opinion that the water where Timothy lived was bad, and therefore Paul gave directions for the substitution of wine (!).

The Apostle Paul himself was subject to infirmities, the most distressing of which was the sore eyes (or some similar physical ailment) with which he was afflicted. He was also compelled to leave Trophimus sick at Miletum.

John wishes above all things for the physical health of the beloved Gaius, whose body was evidently cast in a delicate mould.

While dealing not with **theories** of what might be, under given circumstances, but with **facts** as they are, it is well to remember that two of the saintliest men of modern times, men whose lives were examples of the power of Faith, and who are considered ornaments to the Christian Church, made no claim to the possession of the gift of healing, nor did they even accept the so-called doctrine of "divine healing." We refer to George Müller of Bristol and to Hudson Taylor.

Spurgeon has well said, "Until we get wings and can fly, let us be content to use our legs like ordinary mortals."

V. DIVINE LIFE.

As to the significance of this term we confess our inability to clearly comprehend it. We have read much concerning it, and heard more, but it still remains somewhat vague and illusive.

The claim seems to be that the Christians who accept divine healing by faith become possessed of a different kind of physical life from others. It has to do with "breathing in" some influence that is said to work a change in their bodily condition, pre-empting from sickness and disease.

It pains us to recall some of the professions and testimonies we have heard in this connection. They were so coupled with the person of our Lord Jesus Christ, as to make them seem to our ears, grossly familiar and irreverent, though we readily agree they were not so intended.

The argument is carried to an extreme position when it is claimed that the body of the believer becomes so identified with Christ's body that it is animated by some kind of supernatural life. It is further boldly asserted, that the bones of such will not, or cannot be broken, because not a bone of the Saviour's body was broken.

Alas! alas! We have seen the strongest professors of this high claim, become subject to and die from the common diseases of humanity, and in several cases know of falls and accidents, in the very midst of the work, which resulted in badly broken bones; not to speak of the many shattered bodies of chronic invalids, in which the spark of physical life flickered painfully.

Furthermore, this so-called divine life seems to offer no guarantee against baldness, and loss of teeth, eyesight and hearing. Our friends may

disclaim the use of M.D.'s, but they call as frequently as others upon the Doctor of Dental Surgery, and the optician.

Consistency, O thou jewel!

What we have herein said does not conflict in any way with the blessed fact that conformity to God's will is in a general way conducive to physical health. The path of simple obedience is the path of peace; and a peaceful heart, a heart cleansed by the blood of Christ, in-dwelt by the Holy Spirit, and cheered by the promises of God, may well have as its accompaniments a clear conscience, calm nerves and a courageous purpose, all of which are surely productive of bodily vigor.

Further Scriptural Expositions

ROMANS 8: 11.

THE use of this passage in the cause that is being questioned, is another example of of the bold misappropriation of Scripture so common. Without any reasonable study of the context, or the use of any sensible analogy, the verse is taken to mean that the mortal bodies of believers will be freed from disease and restored to physical health. What a low plane of interpretation! The real meaning is something much better and higher, the analogy of the Saviour's resurrection, being beautifully employed to illustrate the work of the Spirit in raising us up to a real life of spiritual victory and activity, a meaning which the succeeding verses fully carry out.

Let us quote the words of an able expositor: "I understand the word 'quicken' as referring to the body, as subject to carnal desires and propensities; as by nature under the reign of death, and therefore mortal. The sense is, that under

the Gospel, by the influence of the Spirit, the entire man is made alive in the service of God. Even the corrupt, carnal, and mortal body, so long under the dominion of sin, is made alive, and recovered to the service of God. This is done by the Spirit that dwells in us, because that Spirit has restored life to our souls; because He abides with us with His purifying influence; and because the design and tendency of His indwelling is to purify the entire man, and to restore all to God. Christians thus in their bodies and in their spirits become sacred. For even their body, the seat of evil passions and desires, becomes alive in the service of God."

JAMES 5 : 14.

Without devoting any time to the question as to whether the oil to be used possessed any medicinal or healing virtues, though some high authorities contend for this as being well understood in Eastern lands; and without raising any question as to the identity of the "elders" to be called; in fact, being quite willing to accept the oil as symbolical, and the "elders" to refer to modern pastors and office bearers in any local

church or assembly, and being more than willing, even eager, to emphasize and urge the propriety and importance of having Christians take a deep interest in those who are sick, by visiting them and unitedly praying for them with sympathy, and in faithful dependence on God, yet we cannot agree to the extreme position taken by many as to this verse. To such we commend the following words of truth and soberness on "The prayer of faith," by Albert Barnes:

"The prayer offered in faith, or in the exercise of confidence in God. It is not said that the particular form of the faith exercised shall be that the sick man will certainly recover; but there is to be unwavering confidence in God, a belief that He will do what is best, and a cheerful committing of the cause into His hands. We express our earnest wish, and leave the case with Him. The prayer of faith is to accompany the use of means, for all means would be ineffectual without the blessing of God. '*Shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up.*' This must be understood, as such promises are everywhere, with this restriction, that they will be restored to health

if it shall be the will of God; if He shall deem it for the best. **It can not be taken in the absolute and unconditional sense, for then, if these means were used, the sick person would always recover, no matter how often he might be sick, and he need never die."**

As to the act of anointing with oil we quote Whitaker, an old English divine. "Let them use oil who can by their prayers obtain recovery for the sick; let those who cannot do this, abstain from using the empty sign." In this connection let us imagine ourselves at a modern healing meeting where these directions in James are supposed to be followed.

After an address appropriate to the occasion, a number of afflicted ones present themselves. Now, let us ask the elders, "Can you offer the prayer of faith?" This is the vital, essential point. They must either answer Yes or No. They will hardly answer in the affirmitive, for conscious of their lack of power, they usually in advance disclaim any personal ability to help the sufferers.

But should they answer Yes, and taking for

granted that the answer is true, then we know that every one of the candidates will be healed, for this is the promise. If the answer is No, then wherein lies the purpose of the anointing with oil? That is merely a sign or symbol, which anyone can perform. *It is the prayer of faith that saves the sick,* and if this is absent, the anointing is merely an empty form. The force of the above aspect of the case appeals strongly to us in view of the fact, before stated, that in a weekly attendence of six months on a meeting for healing, during which time hundreds were anointed, we saw no one healed.

Healing in the Atonement

THIS phrase represents the citadel of the position we are combating, and of itself is a perfectly correct expression. The Atonement includes healing for the body, as it includes every other blessing named in the Word of God.

But while admitting this, we feel that it will be an easy task to show that the beneficient and glorious work of the Atonement is progressive in its development, and that physical healing is among the blessings whose full enjoyment is yet future.

To plainly illustrate our meaning, let us take the promise of the resurrection of the body. This is to be one of the happy results of the Atonement. It is sure and unalterable, and yet we are by necessity obliged to wait for its fulfilment. Its occurrence will mark one of the stages in the development of the progressive work of the Atonement.

In like manner is perfect bodily health a future

accompaniment of the complete restoration which our Lord's victorious death and resurrection won for us, but from every viewpoint cannot be fully possessed until the Millennial age is ushered in. Our Lord will surely restore all things, but His plan covers the ages, and His followers must patiently wait for its unfolding.

A passage which is often quoted in this connection is that in Matt. 8: 17, "That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses."

This is used to sustain "Healing in the Atonement," though there is no mention of any such thing. The miracle which the Saviour here performed was in itself a fulfilment of the prophecy in Isaiah 53: 4, from which it is quoted, and moreover was performed by our Lord *in His life,* before He reached the Cross of suffering and death.

If there is complete healing for the body through the Atonement, it seems a most difficult blessing for many to secure now.

Many are constantly "believing for it," and yet

not securing it, while those who claim to have it, frequently lose it, all of which makes it so unlike the other present benefits of the Atonement. He who is saved by faith is not every little while losing his salvation. He who receives the Holy Spirit does not lose Him, for He remains an abiding guest in the believer's heart.

Then there is the fact that will not down, and to which we have already referred, that many who do not believe that physical health is a distinctive blessing of the Atonement, in the sense held by "divine healing" followers, are nevertheless strong and robust.

This brings us to a serious charge against some "divine healers," who while definitely insisting on the doctrine of "healing in the atonement," yet kindly make allowance for those of their followers who, being considered weak in faith, still resort to physicians and remedies in the stress of real sickness and pain. The "point" in the charge is this, that if the atonement made by Christ on the cross includes healing of the body for the believer now, then it is clearly a denial of its efficacy for the believer to employ material remedies

for his recovery, and he who condones or sanctions such denial for any reason, is guilty of a grievous sin.

In the interest of fairness, this one thing at least may be placed to Dowie's credit, viz: that he was guilty of no weakness, or inconsistency here. To him there was healing in the Atonement for all believers now, and therefore the use of doctors and drugs was always a denial of Christ's atoning work, and consequently an unpardonable offense, and as such mercilessly condemned.

(The above paragraph pertains to Dowie in the hey-day of his success. All the world knows of his miserable failure since, from every standpoint.)

Practical Observations

IN introducing a chapter on practical observations, involving cases either under our personal view, or so well known as to preclude question, we would say that there seems to be a subtle attraction to many Christians in the prospect of being able to assume a position of spiritual superiority over their fellows. And we know of no profession that so encourages this attitude as that of "divine healing."

There is such a delicate and refined sense of spiritual pleasure in feeling that one has reached a plane in divine apprehension and enjoyment, a little higher than the great mass of Christians, and we are of the opinion that this tendency partakes in some degree of the nature of the second temptation endured by our Lord, when He was urged by Satan to cast Himself from the pinnacle of the temple. Presumption formed the elementary sin here presented. Faith is one thing, and fanaticism is another. The Saviour undoubtedly

had the power to descend from the pinnacle through the air without injury, but there was no occasion for the manifestation of such a miracle. The pinnacle was ordinarily reached by a stairway, he had ascended by it, and by means of the stairway He would also descend.

We would also here take occasion to treat that question that is often put to those ordinary Christians, who while taking the position that it is God's will that they should be sick, yet take remedies in order to recover. The question presented to such, by the advocates of divine healing, being, "If it is God's will that you should suffer, why do you seek, by employing means, to recover? Why not be submissive to His will, and remain in your present distress, until God effects a change?" To us this question, which seems to be so logical and conclusive, represents the merest sophistry. For while it is true that every condition and circumstance of our life is permitted by God, and in a sense may be said to be His will, yet we know that we are constantly making choices and decisions, and performing actions with a view to changing our lot, and that

too not in any way from a spirit of opposition to God's will, but animated by prayer and a desire to please Him. For instance, a Christian man with a dependent family is out of employment, day after day passing without his being able to secure a position. It is undoubtedly God's permissive will that he should be so situated, but would he be justified in quietly folding his hands and in waiting for work to find him? Not at all. Our friends of the contrary part would doubtless soon designate him as being lazy. No, rather would he be commended for leaving no stone unturned in trying to find a place and wages. The application is plain and indisputable. Many other illustrations could be used to prove the same conclusion.

Another phase of teaching that we have noticed, and one that brings "divine healing" dangerously near to Christian Science (though in the main we admit they are far apart), is that in which the sufferers are admonished to "take their healing by faith," "to claim it," "to ignóre symptoms," "to count it done." etc., etc., and consequently we know of many who testify to be-

ing healed when any observer can see that such is a false claim.

The most distressing case of this prevailing

INCONSISTENCY

to come under our notice, is that of one who suffered from boyhood with a diseased spine, which seemed to necessitate the wearing of a special appliance. This was removed at the earnest solicitation of the patient, who has not since resumed it, but he was never healed, and is today, and he has been all along a painful example of that oppressive malady "locomotor ataxia," or something quite similar.

No one questions his godliness, but to many it is altogether incomprehensible how he could write and issue a pamphlet, in which his case is so stated as to cause those who have not seen him, to believe that he was and is truly healed.

This illustrates how misleading are the claims often put forth. So eager are those friends to advance evidence for their position that they frequently cite cases and give testimonies that have no warrant in fact. In the book entitled "A

Study of Faith Healing,"* by A. T. Schofield, M.D., the author gives a striking instance of this practice. We quote from page 112: "I read a most interesting case of such apparent cure in Dr. A. J. Gordon's **Ministry of Healing.** It is a story told by a doctor of the healing of his son, who broke both bones of his forearm. His uncle, a leading Chicago surgeon, put the arm in splints, bandages and a sling. Next morning the child begged to have them all removed, but was told he must wear them for six weeks before the arm would be well. 'Why, papa,' he replied, 'it is well!' and then he told his father how he had asked Jesus to make it well, and it was well. The father did not like to chill his faith, and suggested he should ask his uncle. So he went to him and told him, 'Jesus had made his arm well.' The uncle pooh-poohed the idea, and sent him away. The next morning the boy pleaded again he was well, and almost persuaded his father it was so. At last, to satisfy him, the uncle took off, very reluctantly, the splints and bandages, and

* Published by Fleming H. Revell Co.

exclaiming, 'It is well, absolutely well!' hastened to the door to keep from fainting.

"This story impressed me much, but I felt I could not quote it, as I had not verified it. It is well I did delay, for I find, from an interesting work on faith-cures by Mr. Gliddon, that it has been investigated by Dr. James Henry Lloyd, of the University of Philadelphia, and the result published in the (American) **Medical Record** for March 27, 1886, in the form of a letter from the very child, who says:

" 'Dear Sir: The case you cite, when robbed of its sensational surroundings, is as follows: the child was a spoiled youngster, who would have his own way, and when he had a **green stick** fracture (the bones only partly broken) of the forearm, after having had it bandaged for several days, concluded he would much prefer going without a splint. To please the spoiled child, the splint was removed, and the arm **carefully adjusted in a sling.** As a matter of course, the bones united, and being only partially broken, of course all the sooner. This is the miracle. Some nurse, or crank, or religious enthusiast, ignorant

of matters physiological and histological, evidently started the story, and unfortunately my name—for I am the party—is being circulated in circles of faith-curites, and is given the sort of notoriety that I do not crave.—Carl H. Reed.'

"I may add, the date of the second edition of Dr. Gordon's book that contains the story, but not the reply, is 1886, the year that this letter appeared."

We have also observed quite a variation in the admonitions and directions as to how to secure the practical blessing of healing, and these divergences often by the same speakers. Sometimes the blessing is presented as difficult of obtainment. "You must fight to get it," etc., etc., while at other times it would be shown to be as easy of attainment as breathing. Whether or not these contradictory directions account for the failure of so many to attain, the fact remains that the great majority still merely abide in hope.

Indeed the proof that there are still difficulties in the way of the smooth operation of this doctrine may be seen even among the champions and veterans of the cause. One noted leader, to whom

many look up with admiration, has for years been dreadfully near-sighted, and at every service has, in trying to read without glasses, squinted even as do many non-professors, while his teeth have fallen out betimes without any more ado than in the case of any other human being. This reminds us of the challenge sometimes flung out by a stout Scotch matron, who at the healing meeting, while testifying, would cry in strident tones, "Ah, it's well enough to say 'The Lord is your healer,' but who's your dentist?" Whereat there would be a guilty ducking of many heads.

Another inconsistency is presented in the speed with which, when ailments come, a physician is consulted, "but not for treatment, O dear, no—merely for diagnosis, you know!" We can see something to commend in this course, for in the desire to see of just what nature the ailment is, there is at least no chance to charge the person with having any Christian Science sympathies, for that cult denies the very reality of physical disorder, which of course precludes diagnosing.

Sometimes indeed the medical fraternity is even in a more pronounced way made use of. A

young lady adherent of the movement was acknowledging that her mother (a long-time disciple), had broken her arm by a fall. "Did you call a doctor?" inquired the lady with whom she was conversing. "No," was the answer, "we merely had a surgeon to set the bones, and to bind up the arm." And the tone conveyed the impression that no compromise had been made, and that the action was the proper one for them under the circumstances. The doctrine as to the non-breaking of the believer's bones seemed to have been thrust into utter oblivion for the time, so that it had no inconvenient bearing on the case, though on previous occasions it had been presented with charming confidence.

As a further example of the inconsistencies constantly encountered in any investigation of this subject, we make reference to the common and frequent testimony of sufferers that they have been cured of one ailment but not of another, though they were still expectant that it would also soon yield.

Under the head of

FALSE CLAIMS.

we cite the case of an attractive woman, active in Christian work, and strong in her belief in "divine healing," who was taken ill with small-pox, and, while yet ignorant of the nature of her disease, traveled to her parents' home in an adjoining State, where she was examined (but not treated) by physicians, and then well supplied with every attention, including competent nurses. The disease ran its course, and her strong constitution finally emerged from the ordeal with no seeming injury. All this is certainly a frequent occurrence. Doctors are often unable, in certain diseases, to add anything efficient to good nursing and attention, and yet in this case, about which there was nothing at all remarkable, the patient gives a thrilling account of her miraculous recovery on the ground of "divine healing." Truly God should have the glory in this, as in all other instances of recovery, but there was nothing distinctive about the one we have named.

EXCUSES AND EXPLANATIONS

are of necessity much employed in this cause.

They are many, varied, unique, ingenious, and alas, often disingenuous.

"Why do you wear two pairs of glasses, when you read?" was asked of a particularly zealous advocate of divine healing, who was prone to criticise and condemn other Christians for using remedies. He had evidently been asked before, and had his answer ready, "I was born with a peculiar formation of the eyes, and their condition is not therefore a disease, nor a deformity. The case is similar to that of a person born with red hair."

A dear old saint, who was considered a bulwark of the faith, had for years a goitre, though it was usually fairly well concealed. When asked by some younger disciples about it she said, "Dear children, I have asked the Lord for years to remove it, but as He does not do so, I feel that it must be His will to have me endure it." No one will object to this, only it is a clear conviction of the baselessness of the doctrine.

She also sometimes spoke of her arm, once broken, and which healed without physician or surgeon, but alas, it was crooked at the break.

Almost any doctor could have made a better job of it, and it was therefore hardly fair to exhibit it as a sample of God's healing power. This good woman died of cancer.

The painful death of Dowie's daughter by burning in his own home, gave opportunity for the offering of an excuse or explanation, the rank boldness of which is almost staggering. It seems that the "First Apostle" had some time previously (or was it a convenient fiction?) forbidden the use of alcohol in Zion, and the flame which set fire to the young lady's dress came from a small alcohol lamp, which she was using in arranging her morning toilet. Therefore the stern, and above all things righteous father declared at the funeral without hesitation, that it was an act of disobedience that led to his child's death. And strange to say, this strained, unnatural and heartless expression of judgment instead of alienating his followers, and bringing doubt and disintegration to "Zion," had the effect, we are told, of uniting his followers more closely; thus showing the power of fanaticism when directed by the strong hand of a master.

In a little pamphlet before us by an English minister, in favor of divine healing, is a chapter on **"Delayed Healings."** It had to be inserted in conformity with facts, but in itself is a good answer to many of the other dogmatic statements elsewhere presented. Taken separately it is a good argument against "divine healing," as commonly taught.

The common and most ready of all explanations of failure is "lack of faith." How convenient and unanswerable this attitude is, can at once be seen. It puts the matter beyond all controversy, as the sick one has no way of proving that he has faith enough.

Yet we remember the gentle and touching question once put by an aged saint of God who was fast losing his eyesight, and who though prominent in his denomination, and realizing that he would be criticised for doing so, attended a humble meeting of believers in divine healing. He said to them: "I am willing now to be anointed, or to take any other outward step that is commended to me, with no care as to what may be said by my friends. You say that my healing is

only dependent on my faith, I am willing to have the faith, but must it not be imparted to me by God?" There was no answer.

More sad it is for us to record that in a particularly distressing case, where the applicant for healing had persisted in coming, and was faithful in meeting all requirements without any favorable result, the harsh and horrible explanation given to him was, that he had a devil.

To even describe in brief the instances of abject

FAILURE

that have come under our observation, and that, too, when all so-called conditions had been fulfilled, would alone require an ample volume. We will therefore be content to refer to only a few in addition to those already referred to. As a preface it is well to note that "Healing Homes," "Faith Homes," etc., are notoriously incompetent to deal with contagious diseases. Imagine the consternation of the managers if a case of smallpox, or scarlet fever were brought for treatment!

But such an extreme illustration need not be employed to show the lack of real power. We

have known persons to be heartlessly turned away who were suffering with some ordinary ailment, though of a chronic nature, and whose presence would require more or less attention, with no great prospect of financial remuneration. All at once it would be discovered that their own home was the best place for such patients.

Again, to shift the scenes. A young missionary has just reached Africa, with high ideals, and earnest purpose, together with a firm belief in the doctrine of "divine healing," which he has sincerely and fervently accepted at headquarters before going forth.

As he journeyed into the interior with the superintendent, a godly man, with a practical mind, and with years of experience in Africa—he is asked whether he has fortified his system against the deadly African malaria and fever. "No," he replies, from his high attitude, "I would consider it a step backward to return to remedies," and advances the usual arguments for his faith. Within two weeks they laid him away to rest.

The superintendent was a man of faith, but he knew that quinine was an antidote to the malaria

of Africa, and had often proven its efficacy, while laboring there for years.

A certain prominent leader in the work, was wont to relate with much positiveness how he had once been raised from a dying bed, and how strong he now was, etc. He had traveled extensively and maintained his testimony for a long time, and yet finally succumbed quickly to the conditions encountered in Africa, while on a visit there.

We assure our readers that it is only with a feeling of great sadness that we refer to cases like that of the saintly Dr. A. J. Gordon, who held this doctrine for years, who wrote a book upon it, and yet who finally passed away a victim to disease.

Poor discredited Dowie, is one of the latest examples, as smitten with paralysis he awaits an ignominious end.

The following is a clipping (without amendment) from a daily paper, noticed while preparing these pages, and as an illustration it tallies with hundreds of similar cases, where the doctrine fails to work:

PRAYERS FAIL TO SAVE BABY.

Father Held for Failing to Call Physician When Child Had Typhoid.

Philadelphia, Feb. 23.—Daniel Bates, who doesn't look like a religious fanatic, was held today on the charge of permitting his two-year-old daughter to die of typhoid fever without providing a physician or giving her medicine.

"The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away," said Bates in explanation. He said he belonged to the "Faith Tabernacle," a little church of 300 members, who believe in reliance on prayer only, as a remedy for sickness and injury.

"How did you and your parents expect the child to recover when it was neglected in such a manner?" one of Bates's daughters was asked by the Coroner.

"We do not believe in the use of medicine or physicians," she said, "but have confidence in healing by prayer; and as all of us prayed we thought the child would recover. Another little sister of mine was seriously ill not long ago and she was saved by our prayers."

Rachel Bates told the Coroner that she did not think it was due to any fault of her father or anybody else that the child died. "For eight years," she said, "we have trusted in the Lord to relieve us of all ills, and during that time have not bothered with physicians or medicine."

Our last example is one which in a marked way tells the lesson we are seeking to convey.

A minister of high standing in the work, and its chief representative in a large city, is taken ill and promptly there gather about him, the members of his congregation and believing friends, who go properly through the prescribed forms of anointing, laying on of hands, etc., etc., and though the patient shows no sign of improvement, they rejoice in the prospect of his early recovery. But instead, he continues in pain, and rapidly grows worse, notwithstanding their redoubled efforts. Nothing seems to avail, until it is evident the loved one is dying. When this seems assured, they change their attitude, and now see that the time of his departure has arrived, and that, his work being done, the Lord is about to take him home, and so become reconciled to

the conditions. But for legal reasons they consider it important to send for a physician. He arrives and begins an examination, and soon discovering the nature of the ailment, applies a bandage and gives his remedies, with the happy result that the sick man is soon up and about, as busy as ever in the service of his Lord. A clear case to an unprejudiced observer and one that speaks volumes; and yet a few months later the recovered brother is again speaking on the platform at a large convention and his theme is "Divine Healing."

What Should Be the Christian's Attitude?

IT would certainly hardly be fair to close the treatment of this important subject without seeking to present the Christian's proper attitude. He is ever liable to sickness and disease, and, when not himself afflicted, is never free from witnessing suffering in others, whether friends, relations or neighbors.

First, then, we name as essential to a proper attitude, an intelligent understanding of the Word of God. We have tried to show that many of the scriptural arguments for "divine healing" are altogether without foundation, that in some instances they are grossly distorted and misapplied, and we here add that not a single verse in the New Testament teaches that Christians in this age are to be exempt from physical afflictions. There is to be a new earth in which the inhabitant shall not say, "I am sick" (Isaiah 33:24), but that age has not yet dawned, and to make the application to the present is an unwarranted forcing of Scripture.

That the Bible is opposed to material remedies for disease in the bodies of believers is another utterly false position, and one that has wrought untold harm.

In a little book, **"Divine Healing and Doctors; What Says the Bible?"*** the author sensibly states in the preface, "God can and doubtless does heal without the use of material agencies; but this is His extraordinary and unusual mode of working. His ordinary method is to heal in connection with the use of means. One may be a firm believer in divine healing and, at the same time believe in the use of remedies.

"Christ taught us to pray, 'Give us this day our daily bread,' and yet all believe that to obtain this gift of daily bread there must be a diligent use of means."

In the several chapters of his book the author shows, first, that there are but few references in the Bible to medicine and physicians, and accounts for it on the ground that the Bible is not a medical treatise, as it is likewise not a book on commerce or on astronomy. Then he gives all

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the *direct* scriptural references to remedies, and next the passages in which the use of remedies is implied, also all the illustrative and figurative allusions, and then closes with a chapter on "Conclusions" from which we take the following extracts:

"We have now examined practically all the passages that have a direct bearing upon the subject under consideration; and the conclusion is certainly irresistible that the Bible is favorable to the use of medicine and the employment of physicians."

"But this conclusion does not in any way imply that the Bible endorses all the nostrums and poisons that pass for medicine, and all the quacks and fakers that call themselves doctors, and the habit of saturating the human system with drugs. The Bible is unquestionably on the side of the church and the ministry and religion; but this does not imply that it endorses all the organizations that are called churches, and all the fanatics and cranks that are trying to preach, and all the absurdities that are done in the name of religion."

"While the Bible is favorable to the proper use

of remedies, it lays great emphasis upon the importance of prayer and the value of right relations to God. He is the one "who healeth all thy diseases.' However the healing may come, whether direct or through remedial agencies it is from Him. The one who puts all his faith for recovery in medicines and doctors makes a serious mistake. These have their place, but they should never displace Him 'in whom we live and move and have our being.' Asa's great mistake was not that he turned to the physicians but that he turned away from God. Perhaps no one understands the limitations of his own work better than the physician himself, and the need of having his work supplemented by a wisdom and power greater than his own. The medical profession will never attain its highest possibilities in dealing with the secret problems of that force we call life, until it becomes more reverent, and gives larger place to God. Every physician knows how strong the impulse of faith is in every human heart."

"In the wilderness the children of Israel received the manna without any intervening

agency. But this was simply a temporary measure. Later they were taught that the products of the 'land flowing with milk and honey' were just as truly from God as was the manna. In fact, the faith that saw God in the fruitful vineyard and the rich harvests was in some respects a higher type of faith than that which saw Him in the giving of the manna and of the water in the wilderness."

The attitude of that eminently holy and yet wise and practical servant of God, John Wesley, was a happy and exemplary one. He had sublime confidence in God, and knew how to ascertain the will of God. Once when suffering with a cyst that seemed to require cutting and which involved some danger, he decided not to have the operation performed, saying, "I know a better way," and betaking himself to prayer, in a short time was marvelously relieved. Yet at other times he did not hesitate to use remedies both for himself and others. In fact in his constant visits among the people in all parts of the kingdom, he frequently prescribed for them himself, and was quite a successful physician in a humble way.

Nowhere in his journal or in his sermons do we find expressions of belief in any special system or doctrine of "faith" or "divine healing," though he is often unfairly claimed by the latter school.

To show further the foolishness of the outcry against means, let us look at the subject from another standpoint, viz: Where is the line to be drawn between a rational use of nature's **laws,** and the use of its recognized **remedies?**

Our friends sometimes make a show of using some of the common sense with which God usually endows people, when with all their teaching of "faith" they deprecate violation of the laws of nature, even suggesting that a person could hardly expect healing who was careless in this regard. This is well and good, but why do they not also remember that there are **remedial** laws of nature, as well as prohibitive ones, and that if it is proper to observe the latter, it is also wise to make use of the former.

If it is proper to wash the exterior of the body with soap and water, why not the throat with an appropriate cleansing antiseptic gargle after

breathing the heavy, poisonous, germ-laden atmosphere, say of homes visited in slum work?

If it is allowable to breathe deeply of fresh air for lung development and as an invigorator, why not on a more urgent occasion use some simple tonic in a more concentrated form?

If fruit is commendable for its beneficial effects, why not a salt extract from fruit when the liver is torpid?

If tea, coffee, salads, some kinds of cake and pie, etc., are tabooed because they are considered injurious, and on the other hand onions, lemons, apples, prunes, celery and other fruits and vegetables commended, do not these latter become medicinal? Why not also employ essences or extracts from them when more urgently needed and when the fresh articles are out of season and cannot be procured?

The action of some ordinary medicinal agents is so well established as to require no argument. Why not make use of them?

Who is wise enough and watchful enough to distinguish between food and medicine in some of its simpler forms; or to discern the differ-

ence between hygiene and some remedial exercise commended by a physician? Are Turkish baths and massages under the ban?

What warrant does the doctrine of divine healing give its advocates for their common employment of the dentist, the optician, the hair and scalp specialist, or the manicure, since the teeth, the eyes, the hair and the nails are all portions of the body?

Is it allowable for wealthy believers in "divine healing" to resort to sea voyages, and to residence in the mountains for change of air—a practice quite common among them, and which they advertise with a naiveté unconsciousness of wrong doing—while their poorer fellows are criticised for resorting to some less expensive method for bodily invigoration, even though it be a medicinal tonic?

Let us be sensibly consistent in our attitude.

One of the brightest things we have ever read on this subject is from the pen of that well-known colored evangelist, Amanda Smith. In an interesting way she tells of her conversion to the doctrine, while still a washerwoman, by the reading

of a little book which her children had picked out of an ash barrel; how she immediately threw away all her remedies, and for a time seemed to get along without the need of them. Then there came a day of illness, when the pain would not yield, though she prayed and fasted. Yet she persevered, and pleaded and persisted, until she suddenly perceived that she was actually dictating to God the manner of her healing, and that her only proper course lay in becoming willing to be healed in any way. So guided, she employed a simple remedy and was soon restored.

She then told of an incident that occurred while being entertained during an evangelistic tour, in a home where both husband and wife were firm believers in "divine healing"; how one morning the husband came downstairs complaining of deafness and pain in his ears; how they followed the prescribed course without his securing relief; and how, finally, the wife prevailed upon him to call on a physician, that the nature of the trouble might at least be known. He soon came back smiling and happy, with the joyful news that the pain was gone and his hearing re-

stored, and then told them in explanation, "the doctor said the wax was pretty hard, but that he could remove it without any trouble." From this Amanda drew the lesson that some people were even expecting the Lord to clean their ears.

OBVIOUS LIMITATIONS.

In all fairness, must not every one admit that there are obvious limitations in God's dealings with men in this age.

No Christian questions His power, but all must admit that in His all-wise providence He is not now operating as He has in other dispensations. Though infinitely just and righteous, He is not now visiting judgment on transgressors, and, on the other hand, though infinitely merciful and loving He is not now indiscriminately blessing His people with material tokens. He is not raising the dead, or performing other miraculous deeds, as in former periods.

Would the strongest believer in divine healing seriously look for God to place an eye in an empty socket, or to add a limb where one had been amputated? He could do so in an instant.

But is such an act His will for this age? And this instead of being a hindrance to faith, should strengthen it; for **real faith has as its basis perfect submission to the will of God.** A confidence in Him, no matter what He gives or withholds. "Thy will be done," sounds the depths of true faith, as it also soars to the highest possible altitude of genuine trust, and it is what God delights to hear from His own, no matter what the trial or discipline through which His child is passing.

To say that sickness and bodily affliction is never for the glory of God, and thus to lift it out from all other forms of discipline to which the Christian is subjected, is a gratuitous and untrue assumption. Let suffering Christians know that God often wishes to display, among other things, the power of His sustaining grace in the person of His loved ones.

Now how can He do this if there are no subjects by whom to demonstrate it?

There must be suffering Christians to prove that there are Christians sustained in suffering. Some have been selected as an exhibit; i. e.,

an object lesson like Paul, who said, 1 Cor. 4:9, "We are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels and to men."

Therefore let such endure their suffering with joy that God's glory may be revealed. How could the martyr spirit ever have been shown without martyrs? Make-believe nor almost-martyrs would not have served the purpose. They must be real martyrs, actually burned at the stake or otherwise cruelly executed, to show to all ages that there is something more powerful than fire, or the sword, or death in any form, even God's sustaining grace giving triumph over all. Said the apostle, when realizing this, "We glory in tribulation." Nor did he add "sickness excepted," for this very thing is undoubtedly referred to on another occasion. "Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me" (2 Cor. 12:9).

Ah, as it is only in the darkness that the brightness of the lamp's flame can be proven, so can trial and only trial demonstrate the Christian's faith. **Submission is the first lesson in the**

school of faith. And this first lesson will in God's wisdom be the problem "sickness," as likely as any other, and the pupil who learns it will show the spirit of that Dr. Payson who when asked, while under great bodily affliction, if he could see any particular reason for the dispensation, answered, "No, but I am as well satisfied as if I could see ten thousand reasons; **God's will is the perfection of all reason.**"

Nothing in the foregoing pages should be understood as teaching that God does not now heal, when it harmonizes with His plan; and in such cases He graciously directs hearts and minds in the appropriate channels of thought and action. But we have tried to make it plain that this course is not a special feature for this present dispensation.

But until God gives His child the "assurance of faith" that he is to be healed without remedies, in an unusual, miraculous way, let him not presume and take a position that he cannot maintain.

It is this spirit of fanaticism that has led to indescribable suffering and premature death, children and invalids being offered as sacrifices, and

then unhallowed excuses given to cover the miserable failure.

It is this also that has much to answer for in the fearful work of dividing families—the Adversary finding in it an effective medium to use in bringing coldness, distrust and separation between husbands and wives, even when both are Christians.

Let us admit that it cannot be questioned that now Christian Science, Spiritualism, Rome's "miracle-working relics," and other false systems can boldly match any cases of healing that may be put forward.

It is not our purpose to explain the wonderful claims made by agencies in whose teachings we have no confidence, though we must admit that many of these claims are shown to represent real occurrences and cannot therefore be disputed, but we believe this—that when God really begins to bare His arm to show His power, the tokens of the same will be so manifest as to cast a shadow on all the achievement of charlatans and sham wonder-workers.

Jannes and Jambres could make serpents of

their rods, and their power seemed for the time equal to that of Moses; but there was a striking and convincing finale when Moses' serpent swallowed those of the enemies of his God.

Failure and Success

IT is certainly a high desideratum in discussing the doctrine treated in this book to possess a comprehension of it that is capable of explaining the failures as well as the successes. Believers in divine healing are quick to herald far and wide all that looks to them like success as a result of their belief, but sadly fail (as we have repeatedly shown) to explain the many, many failures.

On the other hand, he who takes the view we have endeavored to set forth, can not only just as satisfactorily and just as much to the glory of God explain the successes, but can also explain the seeming failures, and in such a way as not to lay himself open to the charge of misrepresentation, folly, fanaticism, or any other that an opponent—be he the rankest infidel living—may seek to bring against him.

Personal Testimony

IN giving his personal testimony the writer realizes that there is nothing extraordinary about it, and that many thousands of Christians could give similar accounts of blessing and deliverance received in God's common methods of dealing with His people in these days. But the experiences are nevertheless very precious, and are often recalled with a grateful heart.

They might not evoke much enthusiasm in a "divine healing" gathering, but as they represent real occurrences, he feels that he has as much right to recount them, as those with thrilling "faith" testimonies have to tell theirs.

When his children—twins—were about five years old, they were taken sick with diphtheria—the heart beating violently and all symptoms pointing to a severe illness, especially in the case of the little boy. The parents looked at once to God for help, but also felt perfectly free to call

in a physician. Although in a strange city, they found an excellent one, who gave faithful and careful attention. Antitoxin was injected, and worked at once a noticeable improvement, so that the children were soon seen to be out of danger. After the usual amount of treatment and nursing, they came out of the sick room looking better and stronger than ever; and to the praise of God, be it said, have never shown any ill effect of the ordeal.

His wife was brought to death's door by hemorrhage of the lungs, and for some weeks her life hung by a thread. Two physicians gave no hope, a third was optimistic, but failed to cause an improvement, or to suggest any special course, while the fourth definitely prescribed removal to a sanitarium in the mountains, where with much difficulty she was removed, though the chance of success in effecting the journey seemed as one in a thousand. So remedial were the mountain air and the specialist's treatment, that in three weeks she was able to leave the sanitarium, and is now, seven years later, enjoying excellent health. It is needless to say that during this time

of trial, the husband was much in prayer and enlisted the prayerful interest of many other friends in various places, and to God he turns in gratitude for hearing and answering prayer.

In laboring in the erection of a Gospel tent on the hottest day of a recent summer, the writer found himself in the evening, on his way home, many miles away, in great suffering and on the verge of collapse. Never in his life had he been so oppressed with physical weakness. Passing a drug-store, he entered and stated his condition to the attendant at the soda fountain, though he was hardly able to make himself heard across the counter.

He was quickly served with a small dose of some cholera mixture, and within a few minutes was walking down the street to the depot as sprightly as ever. His night's sleep was undisturbed and the next day found him with his accustomed strength.

A few years later came an attack of pleurisy, which was the first illness in twenty-five years, requiring a physician. One night will stand out in memory in bold relief, because of its excruci-

ating suffering—every short breath seeming to be the last, until he even longed for death to end his pain. But God had another purpose, and therefore the sedative administered brought relief in sleep, and followed by the frequent application of hot flax-seed poultices to the part of the chest affected, recovery began, and in a reasonable time came complete restoration.

There was no relapse, no complications, and no injurious consequences, but an early return to the duties of a busy life in the service of God.

The foregoing are simple facts, but they are facts. And they have a voice, and that voice speaks in praise of God's goodness and mercy, even though He saw proper to bring about the blessed results through the employment of human skill and material remedies.

Side Lights

HOW GOD HEALS SICKNESS.*

So much fanatical teaching is prevalent in respect to direct answer to prayer in the case of the restoration of the sick, that we would call special attention to the following letter, written by Dr. C. I. Scofield to one who was in trouble and asked advice on the subject. As the letter already has been a blessing to others, we have secured permission to give it to our readers in the hope that the concise presentation of the truth may prove more widely helpful.

All Healing is of God.

"If I understand either the broad teaching of the Scripture concerning the Father's minute providences in His watchful care over His own, or the special teachings concerning healing, I must testify that all healing is divine.

* Editorial from Record of Christian Work.

Whether remedies are used, or only the prayer of faith, the healing is of God. There is great unbelief on this point. Many Christians seem to fancy that by resorting to remedies they can keep their dear ones whether it be God's will or not. It is not so. No remedy avails when God is calling one of His children home.

"The Bible testifies abundantly to the fact that God heals the sick by direct power, apart from remedies. It would be useless to quote passages to prove this; they abound, both in the Old Testament and in the Gospels. If we come this side of the personal ministry of Christ, we find the apostles healing by divine power. This, also, is incontestable. No one disputes it.

The prayer of faith.

But when this dispensation fully opens, that is, when we reach the Epistles, that portion of the Scripture especially given for the instruction of the believer in this dispensation, the subject is scarcely mentioned. Healing is enumerated among the gifts of the Spirit (1 Cor. 12:9); John prays that Gaius may have temporal pros-

perity and health *according* as his spiritual life may be (2 John 2); and James, writing to the twelve tribes scattered abroad, directs that if any are sick they (the sick ones) shall send for the elders, and gives the general promise that the 'prayer of faith shall save the sick' (James 5:14, 15). I do not, with some, limit that promise to the Jewish Christians, nor do I believe the anointing with oil to be medical—a mere oil bath—but symbolical. But what is the prayer of faith? Surely John defines it. 'And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us' (1 John 5:14). But the Epistles have still more to say about sickness and bodily infirmity. Paul has a physical 'thorn,' physical as all agree. He prays thrice; then God stops him. The infirmity must remain. Whereupon Paul glories in it (2 Cor. 11:7-10). For Timothy's stomach trouble he prescribes wine (1 Tim. 5:23). Trophimus he leaves at Miletum sick—without a hint that either Trophimus or himself ought to be in a bad conscience about it (2 Tim. 4:20).

"It comes, then, to this. God heals. There is

no other healing. Sometimes He heals by direct power without remedies. He will always do this for those who, being sick, send for the elders, and are anointed with oil in the name of the Lord, provided the prayer of faith is among them. The result only can determine whether that prayer has been offered.

Faith not a means of escaping God's will.

But faith is not a means of escaping God's will, but of getting that will done. He *could* not give a faith by which something should be wrung from Him *against* His holy and perfect will; nor could any reverent and trustful child of God wish Him to do so. Our extreme divine healing friends insist that it is always God's will to heal. To which I answer. (1) They do not prove it by clear and express Scripture; and (2) if so, *they* are responsible for all death, since the prayer of faith will heal, and need not be that of the sick person. I regard, therefore, your attitude of entire surrender of your child to the will of the Father as the attitude of true faith. It might please Him to give to you,

or to some one of us, the prayer of faith. In that case how gladly we would wing it back to His gracious, loving heart. It may please Him to use climate, air, food, medicine for her healing. How glad we shall be if *that* be His loving will. It may please Him to take your little one to stay with her brother till He comes, Who 'will come and will not tarry.' Then we shall weep, but back of the tears we shall be glad in the perfect will of a perfect God.

God provides means.

I note some things. For instance, our friends ask us if God made the *materia medica* of the doctors. One might as well ask if God made woolen cloth or wheat bread.

"The answer is obvious. God made the wool, man makes the cloth. God made wheat, man makes bread. So God makes cinchona bark, out of which man extracts quinine; God makes grapes, man makes wine, and Paul prescribes a little for Timothy. Such reasonings against remedies are childish.

"But there is something far worse. When anyone tells you that God has made your child ill to chastise you and your family, because you do not hold a doctrine of divine healing which seems true to *them*, they misrepresent and slander our blessed heavenly Father. What! *He* lay suffering on your innocent child to flog *you?* Why, *I* would not do *that;* would *you?* And would our God? Oh, monstrous!

"But let us beware of unfaith. Let us beware of saying that tuberculosis or anything else is incurable. *Nothing* is too hard for God. Let us keep in unbroken and restful fellowship with Him, 'watching daily at his gates, waiting at the posts of his doors'; swift to do what His Spirit or His providences may point out; ready to send up the glad prayer of faith, or ready to use means. No disease is too deadly for his healing; no medicine is powerful enough to overcome His will."

THE JOY OF CONFIDENCE.

Let me but hear my Saviour say,
"Strength shall be equal to thy day;"
Then I rejoice in deep distress,
Leaning on all-sufficient grace.

I can do all things—or can bear
All suffering, if my Lord be there;
Sweet pleasures mingle with the pains,
While He my sinking head sustains.

I glory in infirmity,
That Christ's own power may rest on me;
When I am weak, then am I strong;
Grace is my shield, and Christ my song.

—Isaac Watts.

THE WITNESS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

We should expect that a doctrine of so much importance as "Healing for the Body in the Atonement for this Age" would be foreshadowed in the law of the Levitical offerings where indeed every great truth of our Christian faith is outlined with clearness and beauty; but as a matter of fact there is not a single case of Divine Healing in the Old Testament that was mediated by the Aaronic priesthood, or in which "blood," the type of the Atonement was employed. The application of blood as we read of it in Leviticus XIV chapter, was not employed in *healing* the leper, but applied *after* his healing and as a testimony that he was now clean. Such cases of healing in the Old Testament as that of Miriam, Naaman or Hezekiah, were instances of special miracles, and that such occur today, it is not the object of this book, as we have stated elsewhere, to dispute.

Suggested by Rev. W. W. Mead.

DR. J. M. BUCKLEY'S ANSWER TO A QUERY IN "THE QUESTION BOX" AT CHAUTAUQUA.

Q.—Is the healing principle in faith healing and Christian Science the same?

A.—There is no "principle of healing" in any of them. The healing is done by the strength of the medicine of nature. Believe and you will be healed, says the faith healer. The mental scientist simply produces certain conditions in the mind of the person to be healed; the Christian Scientist denies the reality of disease and forbids thinking about it. I know this to be true for I have healed people that way myself. I will give you four cases which I published in the *Century Magazine.*

A woman was subject to fits of asthma and spasmodic headache. I took a common bronchial troche, and having powdered it, told her to put it in a tumbler of water and take a teaspoonful every hour, and by no means to drink a cup of tea within twenty-five minutes after taking the dose. These powders cured her headaches and

kept off her asthma for seven months. At the end of that time someone told her that they weren't doing her any good. Then she lost her faith and the powders lost their virtue.

Take another case: A party of people were gathered together to pray for a man who had rheumatism. After praying for some time, the leader, a woman with a penetrating glance, looked straight at the victim and said in a loud voice, "Elijah, rise and walk." Making a great effort he arose. He believed, but he fell head foremost on the floor, and it took the whole family to put him back into bed and he stayed there until he died.

I will give you a third case. A woman had an almost insane delusion. She sent a brother of the church to me to say that she could never rise until I had come and taken her by the hand and commanded her to rise. Her husband was in despair for he did not feel able to hire a servant. I went in and said to her: "Mrs. Sylvester, do you think that God has revealed to you that you cannot rise unless I cause you to rise?" "I am sure of it," she said. "Very well, Elizabeth Syl-

vester," I shouted, "ARISE!" and she fairly bounded to her feet.

The last case is this: A preacher in Canada was greatly excited at some intruders interfering with the meeting. He looked at the leader and said in a thunderous voice, "May God's curse light upon you!" The man fell to the ground and did not return to consciousness for two hours. When he did he was converted and became a great preacher.

Some one will say, "Can't you explain all your Christian miracles in the same way?" Suppose we take the resurrection or the case of the man born blind. Confidence will indeed carry a great distance, but there are limits, and Faith Healing and Christian Science have their limitations.

QUOTATION FROM IL SANTO (THE SAINT).

Description of Professor Selva the saint: "He takes refuge in the Sabine Mountains, and again his saintliness becomes known in the district. He is believed to be capable of miracles; sick and deformed come to him from distant places. He is distressed at this, but his protests are not heeded. He does, in fact, heal the sick—**through their own strong faith,** as he vainly tells them. The poor peasants worship him; students and skeptics come to study his ways, and finally he is denounced at Rome by plotters and enemies as a pretender and blasphemer. Again he is driven from his humble refuge."

COMFORT FOR THE SICK-ROOM.

Bishop Foss's experience in sickness is published in tract form by Cranston & Stowe. Having read it at the time it first appeared, we have recently re-read it, and its closing passage is worthy of being borne into every sick-room. Bishop Foss says:

Again and again it occurred to me what a happy outcome of my sickness it would be if the Saviour should come into my room in visible form and instantly heal me. I knew if He should come and say, "What wilt thou?" my quick response would be, "Lord, make me perfectly whole and perfectly holy." I did not pray for such a miracle, nor wish it; but day after day, in my quiet afternoon hours, the inspiring thought kept coming, "How grand a testimony it would be if, in these skeptical times, I might go forth proclaiming that in a single moment the audible word of the visible Christ had perfectly cured me of a severe sprain, a broken bone, typhoid fever, and prostrating weakness; and if my testimony should be so confirmed by that of physicians and friends as to be lifted above the possibility of scientific doubt!" At length, when this thought had grown so familiar that the realization of it would hardly have surprised me, there came in place of it a strong impression (like an audible voice, and yet there was no voice) sealing on my mind as never before the words: "Thomas, because thou hast seen Me thou hast believed. Blessed [I have always thought that means *more blessed*] are they that have not seen, and yet have be-

lieved." The delicious fancy of a possible miracle gave place to the solid fact of the greater blessedness of that dispensation of providence and grace which can transform and glorify all suffering; and this was a wondrous sweetener of my long trial.

This is the genuine triumph of faith; far above the comprehension of those who, if they can, substitute faith for the ministry of affliction, or the use of the means which God has provided. The same wholesome doctrine pervades that wonderful book entitled *Bella Cook*.—Christian Advocate.

GOD'S ANSWER.

"The cry of man's anguish went up unto God,
"Lord take away pain!
The shadow that darkens the world Thou hast made,
The close coiling chain
That strangles the heart, the burden that weighs
On the wings that would soar—
Lord take away pain from the world Thou hast made
That it love Thee the more!"

Then answered the Lord to the cry of His world,
"Shall I take away pain
And with it the power of the soul to endure
Made strong by the strain?
Shall I take away pity that knits heart to heart,
And sacrifice high?
Will ye lose all your heroes that lift from the fire
White brows to the sky?
Shall I take away love that redeems with a price
And smiles at its loss?
Can ye spare from your lives that would climb into Mine,
The Christ on His Cross?"

—Selected.

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